

to the provision you mentioned, allowing the President to appoint the company officers. This would obviate the difficulty in which the public service is placed. I do not indeed see how the law can be executed, certainly not for the purpose of the present campaign without such a provision. The Secretary of War, whom I saw last evening, told me he had caused an investigation to be made, and found seventeen such grants of power on the statute book.

It seems to me that if the power were granted there would be little danger of its being converted to any unworthy purpose. I do not believe you have anything to fear, on the subject of the company guilty of insubordination.³⁹ Certainly I shall state frankly to the President my opinion that such a step should not be taken, and *I have just reason to believe*, that it will not be taken.

Much of course will depend upon your views in the passage of the law. Perhaps there may be some on your side of the House, who have doubts, and yet not decided ones, and who would therefore permit the matter to pass if they thought the public service demanded it, without their concurrence indeed, but without their opposition.

I am my dear Sir
Truly yours
LEW CASS.

Hon. W. P. Mangum.

*Willie P. Mangum to J. Watson Webb*⁴⁰

Thursday evening 11th Feby 1847

My Dear Sir.

I heard this evening in a conversation with a person, (I hope of no high authority) that the idea is entertained & chuckled over, by some of the *Democracy*, that the President is merely amusing you, & will not ultimately confer the appointment.⁴¹

³⁹See above, 34-36.

⁴⁰This is taken from the typed copy in the possession of Dr. Frank Monaghan, Washington, D. C. The original was not found.

⁴¹See above, J. Watson Webb to Willie P. Mangum, January 6, 1847.